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The Fourth "H" is Health: Family Health

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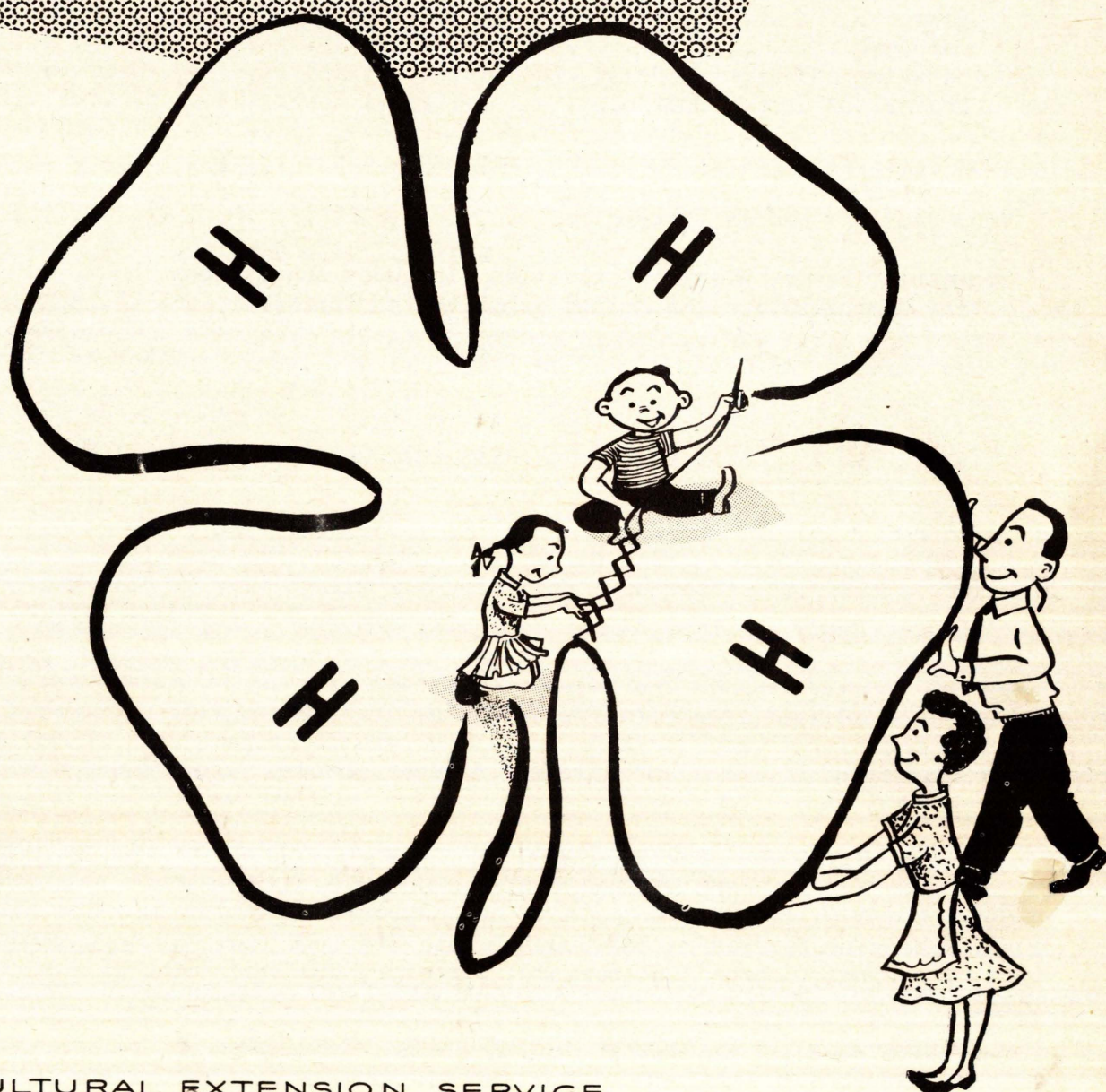
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the fourth "H" is health

FAMILY HEALTH



AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE COLLEGE
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Your Family Health Project

by
Helen Becker and Don K. Wiles

Because so much of your health depends upon the health and habits of all members of your family, this 4-H health activity bulletin is devoted to Family Health. During the project year you will be expected to do the following.

1. Maintain good personal health habits.
2. Continue charting your growth curve.
3. Make two or more improvements in your family's health habits or practices.
4. Maintain a family medical record.

Maintaining Good Personal Health Habits

Maintenance of good personal health habits has been discussed in the "Personal Health" manual, Ext. Circ. 554, and therefore are not discussed in this manual. You are however, expected to (1) continue having regular physical and dental examinations and (2) practice good personal health habits as explained in the "Personal Health" project manual.

Continue Charting Your Growth Curve

When you enrolled in the "Personal Health" activity, you were required to chart your growth curve. While you are participating in this project, you will be expected to continue charting the growth curve. Instructions on how to keep the growth curve and how to interpret it are given in the circular.

Make Two or More Improvements in Your Family's Health Habits or Practices

Family health depends in part upon (1) hygiene and grooming habits, (2) sanitation practices, and (3) emergency preparations. During the year, you are expected to make two or more improvements in your family's health habits or practices. This manual will discuss how this requirement might be met.

To meet this requirement, you need the full cooperation of your parents and other members of your family. This means that you and your family will have to hold several family discussions on the problem of family health. During these sessions members of your family should study their personal health habits, the family's sanitation practices, and preparations for emergencies. Also, during these family councils your family should make plans for improvement.

Note: Because you alone will not be able to make some of the needed improvements you will be given credit for improvements made, if you are responsible for having brought them about.

Maintaining a Family Medical Record

The family medical record is an important part of Family Health. The value and maintenance of such a record will be discussed in the chapter on "Your Family's Medical Record." If one is already being kept, you are expected to help the family keep it up to date.

YOUR FAMILY'S HEALTH AND GROOMING HABITS

The health and grooming habits of each member of the family may determine whether or not they will avoid a disease or infection. For example, there are four habits one should form to avoid catching a cold. The habits are:



1. AVOID PEOPLE WITH COLDS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE



2. BEWARE OF FATIGUE...

AVOID OVERWORK AND GET PLENTY OF REST, EAT THE RIGHT FOODS AND GET YOUR SHARE OF EXERCISE, FRESH AIR AND SUNSHINE



3. KEEP FEET WARM AND DRY BY WEARING YOUR **RUBBERS** AND **OVERSHOES**



4. KEEP OUT OF DRAFTS

RAPID CHANGE OF TEMPERATURE SETS STAGE FOR COLDS BY LOWERING YOUR RESISTANCE TO COLD BUG.

If each member of your family observes these four simple rules, they should contract fewer colds. If they do not form "cold prevention" habits, their chances of catching a cold are much greater.

You can help the members of your family improve their habits by (1) showing them what to do, (2) showing them how to do it, (3) being sure they have a reason for forming such a habit, and (4) encouraging them to form the desired habit. This means a great deal of time, effort, and patience on your part. But if the family improves its health and grooming habits, the effort is worthwhile.

You can help the family improve its health and grooming habits in many ways. Four suggestions are (1) help mother plan and serve balanced meals to all members of the family, (2) help your younger brothers and sisters develop good personal health habits, (3) encourage all members of the family to use a handkerchief or

paper tissue when they cough and sneeze, and (4) see that members of the family who come down with a cold take care of themselves.

If you plan to make improvements in your family's health and grooming habits, use the "Personal Health" activity manual as your guide. Be sure you have their cooperation before you start. And last but not least, set a good example.

YOUR FAMILY'S SANITATION PRACTICES

Sanitation can be defined as the ways and means of stopping the travel of germs from one person to another. It is the way you and your family protect water, air, and food from contamination. "Sanitation is a way of life."

In this part of the activity manual we discuss the proper way to handle drinking water, sewage, and garbage; to handle and care for food; and to control rodents and insects.

If you decide to make this a part of the Family Health Activity, you should make the improvements about your home or be responsible for having had them made.

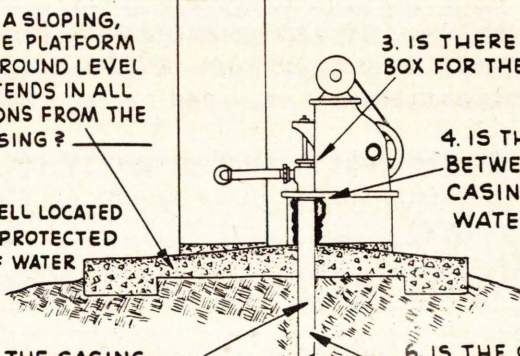
Drinking Water

The germs of diseases such as typhoid fever, diarrhea, and dysentery can live in water for some time. Therefore, it is necessary that drinking water be pure. Impure water can make a person very sick. If you live in a community of 100, or more, safe

drinking water should be provided by the city or town. If it is not provided, discuss this problem with your neighbors and city council members. If you live on a farm or in a community of less than 100, your water supply is probably obtained from a well.

To be sure the well provides safe drinking water answer the questions given in the check list for safe well construction. If all your answers are "yes", the well will probably provide safe drinking water. If one or more of the answers are "no," the well may not provide safe drinking water; and you or someone else should correct this situation. Your county agent can advise you on how to make corrections.

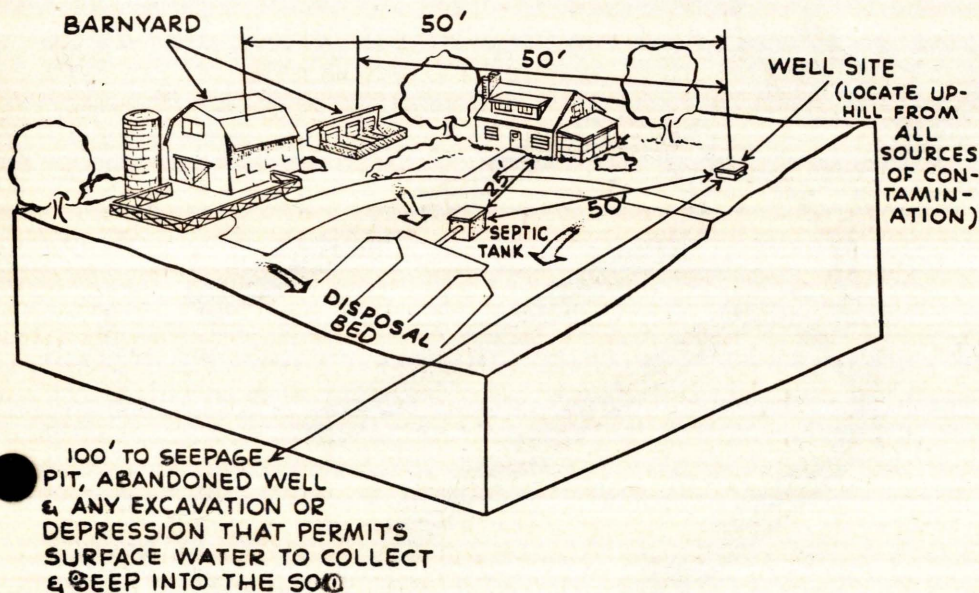
✓ A Check List for SAFE Well Construction

- 
1. IS THERE A SLOPING, CONCRETE PLATFORM ABOVE GROUND LEVEL THAT EXTENDS IN ALL DIRECTIONS FROM THE WELL CASING? _____
 2. IS THE WELL LOCATED SO THAT IT IS PROTECTED FROM RUNOFF WATER & FLOODS? _____
 3. IS THERE A STUFFING BOX FOR THE PUMP ROD? _____
 4. IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE WELL CASING & THE PUMP WATERTIGHT? _____
 5. DOES THE CASING EXTEND AT LEAST 6" ABOVE THE GROUND & AT LEAST 1" ABOVE THE PLATFORM? _____
 6. IS THE CASING WATER-TIGHT, DURABLE, & OF SUFFICIENT DEPTH (at least 10')? _____
 7. IS THE WELL LOCATED UPHILL FROM SOURCES OF CONTAMINATION? _____
 8. IS THE WELL LOCATED THE PROPER DISTANCES FROM SOURCES OF CONTAMINATION? _____
(THE PROPER DISTANCES ARE SHOWN IN THE DRAWING ON THE NEXT PAGE WHICH SHOWS THE PROPER LOCATION OF BUILDINGS, LOTS, SEPTIC TANK, TOILET, ETC.)

Sewage

Waste matter eliminated from our bodies is infected with intestinal parasites or with a disease which may endanger the health of others. For this reason it should be properly disposed of.

Proper Location of Wells and Septic Tank



If you live on a farm or in a community, your family will need to provide their own sewage disposal system. A recommended system is a septic tank and disposal field. The use of a cesspool is not recommended because it endangers the drinking water. If properly constructed and maintained, an earth pit toilet is sanitary.

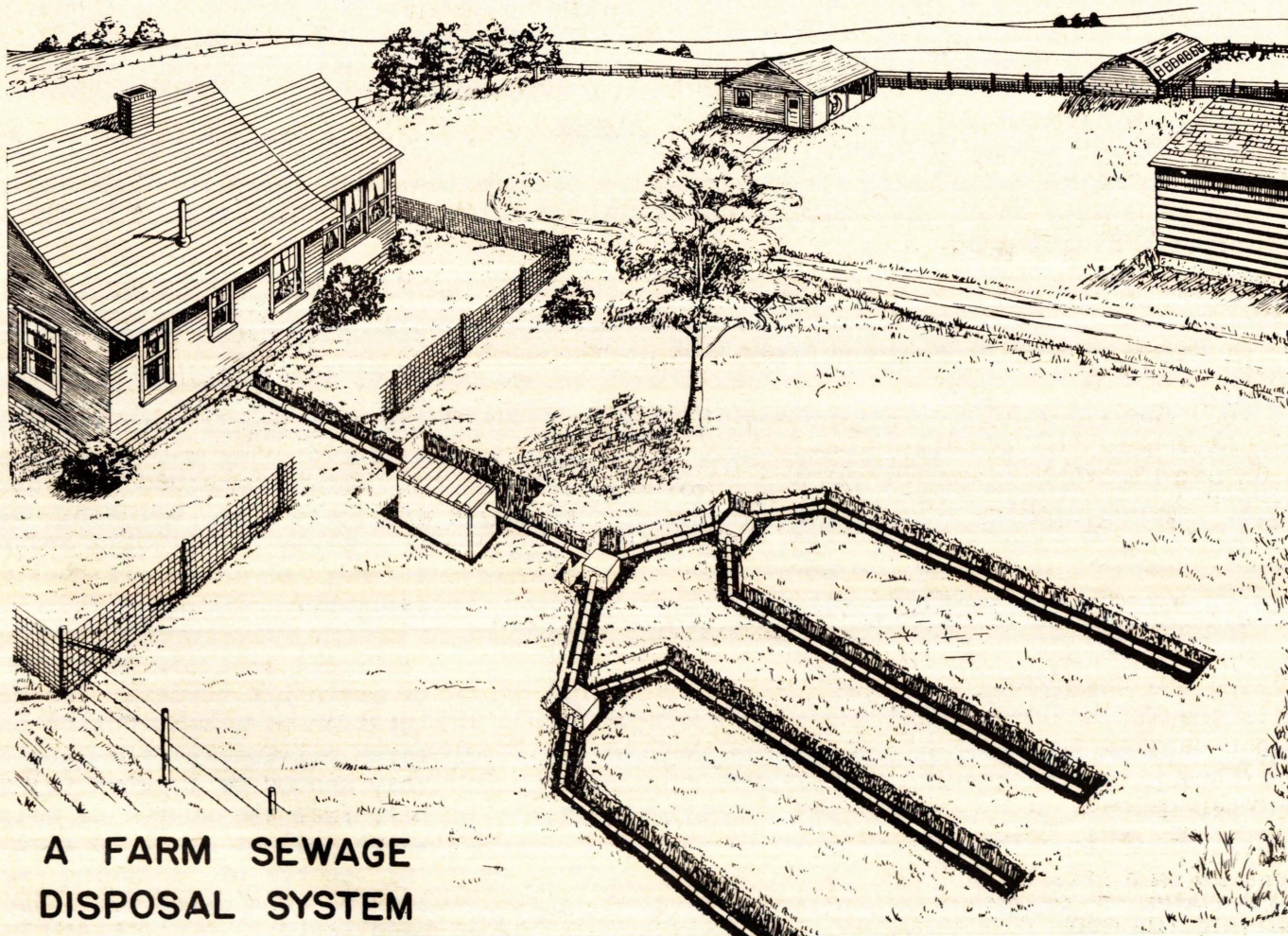
Proper location of septic tank or earth pit toilet: The proper location of a septic tank and an earth pit toilet are the same. They should be located (1) downhill from the source of drinking water, (2) at least 50 feet from the source of drinking water, and (3) in a place not likely to be flooded.

The illustration may give you a better idea as to the proper location of buildings, farm lots, wells that provide drinking water, and a septic tank or earth pit toilet.

Proper construction of a septic tank: If your family has a septic tank ask the questions below. If all your answers are "yes," you probably have a safe sewage disposal system. If one or more of the answers are "no," you or someone else should correct the situation.

1. Is the septic tank properly located? _____
(Proper location is shown in the drawing on the previous page.)
2. Is the septic tank water-tight? _____
3. Is the septic tank large enough to hold 750 gallons or more of liquid? _____
4. Are the disposal field tile lines covered with less than 2 feet of dirt? _____
5. Has the septic tank been cleaned during the last two years? _____

If your family does not have a septic tank and desires to construct one, see your County Extension Service or the State Health Department. They can provide you with plans and information. An excellent circular on the construction and maintenance of a septic tank is available.



**A FARM SEWAGE
DISPOSAL SYSTEM**

Proper care of toilet stool: Toilet stools are usually made of vitreous china and should be cleaned by frequent washing. When new the surface has a smooth glazed finish. The use of coarse abrasives on it develops tiny scratches that makes the stool harder to clean. In most instances, soap and water are adequate cleansing agents. If the water supply is "hard," try a water softener such as washing soda or a non-precipitating water conditioner such as Calgon, Perfex, Clean-it, and White King. They will help to overcome hard water scale that sometimes forms. If an abrasive must be used, select a very fine one.

Commercial cleaners are available but use them only for toilet stools. They are injurious to other finishes. Care should also be taken to avoid the use of chlorine bleach or any cleanser containing chlorine bleach, after using a commercial cleaner. The combination of chlorine bleach and many commercial cleaners forms cyanide gas which is a deadly poison.

Yellow stains on vitreous china is caused by iron in the water. Such stains may be removed by applying an acid, such as hydrochloric, sparingly on the stain and thoroughly rinsing the stool at once.

Proper construction and care of earth pit toilet: As we have already pointed out, an earth pit toilet can be sanitary. A properly constructed earth pit toilet meets the following requirements.

1. The pit is at least 5 feet in depth.
2. The pit is lined and free of dirt cave-in.
3. The pit is tight. (It should not show any evidence of light except when the seat cover is raised.)
4. The contents of the pit are below the level of the ground's surface.
5. A vent pipe is installed that leads from the pit to the outside of the building.
6. The vent pipe is intact and unobstructed.
7. Each toilet seat is equipped with a cover, and the seat covers are used.

At all times, keep the building clean. This means regular and thorough scrubblings.

If your family uses an earth pit toilet, see if it meets the requirements of a properly constructed toilet. Also, see if it is properly located as shown in the illustration on page 5 of this manual. If any faults exist, correct them or have someone else correct them.

Garbage

During the past few years a new method of garbage disposal is the garbage disposal unit in the kitchen sink. It grinds all pieces of garbage into small particles that are then carried away with the waste water. Your family may have installed such a unit and if they have, the family's garbage disposal problem may be well taken care of.

Note: When garbage grinders are used where a septic tank is installed, the septic tank should be at least 50 per cent larger in capacity.

Some homes use incinerators, in such cases the garbage is placed in the incinerator and burned. If your family has an incinerator, they may have the garbage disposal problem solved.

Many families, however, do not have garbage disposal units or incinerators. If you are a member of such a family, your problem is one of having the garbage hauled away and disposed of by someone who makes a business of hauling garbage, or of disposing of your own garbage. In either case you might be able to make some improvements. Let's take a look at your family's garbage container and ask the following four questions:

1. Is our garbage container watertight? _____
2. Is our garbage container covered at all times? _____
3. Is our garbage container fixed so that stray dogs can not tip it over? _____
4. Is our garbage container cleaned regularly? _____

If the answer to the questions are "yes", your problem is partly taken care of. If one or more of the answers are "no," you and your family should correct the situation.

Care of garbage container: As is true of all household utensils, the garbage container should be kept clean. This can be done by scrubbing it with warm water and soap each time it is emptied. The cleaning job will be made easier if the garbage is wrapped in newspaper or placed in a paper sack before it is placed in the container.

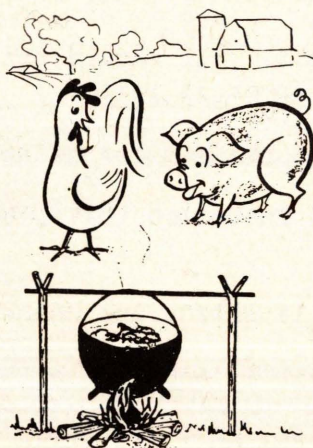
Disposal of garbage: If your family has the responsibility of disposing of their own garbage, follow the four suggestions given below:



1. DUMP GARBAGE IN PLACES THAT ARE DESIGNATED FOR SUCH.



2. DO NOT DUMP GARBAGE ALONG ROADSIDES & IN RIVERS & STREAMS..



3. DO NOT FEED RAW MEAT SCRAPS TO SWINE & POULTRY.



4. IF GARBAGE IS BURIED, BURY IT AT LEAST 24" DEEP.

Handling and Care of Food

The way your food is handled may effect your health as much as what you eat effects your health. For example, pork should always be well cooked before eaten. Raw pork may be a carrier of the disease known as trichinosis. To be sure of good food store, prepare and handle it properly.

Cleanliness: Cleanliness is one of the first rules in the handling and care of food. Each person who handles food should be clean. All food containers and utensils should be clean. Suggested personal cleanliness habits may be found in the "Personal Health" Activity manual. The suggested procedure for washing and handling food containers and utensils are as follows:

1. Scrape all containers and utensils clean before washing.

2. Wash in hot water (120 degrees Fahrenheit) and use soap or detergent.
3. Rinse in hot water (170 degrees Fahrenheit)—preferably for two minutes.
4. Air dry rather than dry with a towel.
5. If silverware is polished, use a clean towel.
6. Store in an area where dirt and dust will not collect. For example, store dishes in a covered cabinet, and silverware in drawers.
7. Handle utensils on the outside surface.

Your Milk: Milk is an important part of your diet. It is nature's most nearly perfect food. But milk that is improperly handled and cared for can be a carrier of some human diseases. To be sure that your milk is safe to drink, ask the questions listed in the "Check List for Safe Milk." If all the answers are "yes," your milk is probably safe to drink. If one or more of the answers are "no," correct the situation or obtain your milk from another source.

If you drink milk that is not pasturized -- change the family's practices by (1) purchasing pasturized milk or (2) pasturizing the milk before it is used. A home pasturizer may be purchased for very little, or you may pasturize milk by using utensils about the house. For home pasturization, follow either of the following suggested methods:

1. Heat the milk to 143 degrees Fahrenheit and hold at that temperature for not less than 30 minutes. Then cool at once.
2. Heat in a double boiler to 160 degrees Fahrenheit. Then cool at once.

CHECK LIST FOR SAFE MILK

1. Heat the milk

1. Does our milk come from herds that are free of T.B. and Brucellosis? _____
2. Are the people who handle our milk clean? _____



3. Are the cows from which our milk comes clean at milking time? _____
4. Is our milk pasturized? _____
5. Are the containers in which the milk is held clean and kept cool until used? _____
6. Do the milk containers have overlapping caps or covers? _____
7. Is our milk kept cool (50°F. or cooler)? _____

Preparation of food: Always wash hands carefully before handling food. And always wash fresh fruits and vegetables before eating them. These and other rules of cleanliness have already been stressed and should be observed—at all times.

Another good rule to practice is "Use water from a safe source." If you are not sure of the purity of water, boil it before using.

When preparing food, follow these rules:

1. Cool foods such as custards, puddings, pie fillings, meat, fish or egg salads, and sandwich fillings soon after making.
2. Heat foods such as chicken pie, poultry dressing, and casserole dishes thoroughly before eating.
3. Cook fresh pork and fresh pork products until well done.
4. Boil home canned vegetables and meat 10 to 15 minutes before tasting.

After the food has been prepared, keep it hot or cold. Illness-causing bacteria sometimes grow in foods kept too long at lukewarm temperatures.

Storage of Food: In general, proper food storage requires that all perishable foods be refrigerated below 50 degrees Fahrenheit, that all dry foods be kept in covered containers, and that all foods stored on shelves or racks be at least 3 inches above the floor. Foods that are classified as perishable are meat, fish, milk, butter, eggs, fruit, and vegetables.

Always protect your food from flies and other insects as well as mice. The practice of never placing food on the floor is one such step. Control of such pests is another step which is discussed on the next page.

Rodent and Insect Control

Rodents and insects have been known to carry disease germs. For example, mice and rats spread the germ that caused bubonic plague in Europe. Some mosquitoes carry the germ that causes malaria. And flies and fleas carry an unknown number of disease germs. Every effort should be made to keep rodents and insects under control. Your 4-H Club Leader; County Home Extension Agent, and County Agricultural Agent will be glad to give you the latest information on how to control rodents and insects. They can also provide you with E. C. 495 "Control Household Insects", which is an excellent reference about such pests.

Ask yourself the following questions: (If the answers are "yes", your family will probably have little trouble with rodents and insects. If one or more of the answers is "no", you should try to correct the situation.

1. Are all our windows and outside doors screened securely? _____
2. Are all our buildings rat and mouse proof? _____
3. Are our buildings, yard, and surroundings clean and orderly? _____
4. Does our family maintain a rat and mouse prevention and extermination program? _____
5. Do we use fly sprays and poisons on places where there are flies? * _____
6. Are all manure, dead animals, trash and filth, and garbage properly covered until disposed of; and is it properly disposed of? _____

*When using sprays and poisons, be sure to use according to the directions given on the container.

YOUR FAMILY'S PREPARATION FOR AN EMERGENCY

Even though we like to think that everything is fine and that nothing will happen, there are times when things go wrong. Perhaps someone becomes ill or is seriously hurt; fire, floods or strong winds may destroy your home; or an unknown enemy may attack. Whatever happens you will come through the emergency much better if you are properly prepared.

There are several organizations that will serve your community during an emergency. Five of them are the Red Cross, the Civil Defense, the local Fire Department, the law enforcement services such as the local police force, and the National Guard. These and other organizations may be able to help you learn more about emergency preparations, that should be made.

Some of the things that you might do are:

1. Prepare yourself; Be able to serve other members of your family during an emergency. This can be done by taking courses such as (a) First Aid, (b) Swimming, and (c) Home Nursing. Your Red Cross may sponsor some of these courses if requested and if enough interest is indicated.
2. Prepare the family: Preparations for possible emergencies should be made as recommended by your Red Cross, Civil Defense, Fire Department, and Police Service.
3. Prevent emergencies: This can be done by having all members of the family properly immunized as instructed by your doctor; and by having your home clean, neat, and orderly.

To become better acquainted with recommended emergency practices, it is suggested that you ask a representative of one or more of the services to speak to your club. Have the person explain the purpose of the organization, how it serves your home, and what you should do. If you decide to make improvements in your home along this line, you should:

1. Discuss the matter with other members of your family and obtain their co-operation.
2. Decide what to do.
3. Do it.

You may never be called upon for such an emergency; but if you and your family ever are, you will be thankful for having been prepared.

Note: Some of the things that have been suggested are also good safety measures. If you are interested in doing more along the line of safety, you should make plans to take part in 4-H safety. Your County Home Extension Agent and your County Agricultural Agent can give you information.

The family cooperates in keeping the Family Medical Record.



YOUR FAMILY'S MEDICAL RECORD

If someone should ask each member of your family when they had their last immunization shots or when they had the measles, could they tell them? Because it is a good idea to keep a family record of immunizations and other health information, this project requires that you help your family maintain a medical record.

Your family's medical record is not a substitute for your doctor's records. But it will help with the planning of your family's health program. If you keep the record accurately and completely, it will be useful in many ways. It will be especially helpful, if you move into a new community.

SUGGESTED "FAMILY HEALTH" PROJECT ACTIVITIES

During the year you and other members of the club may ask, "What can we do to make the club meetings more interesting?" Besides meeting the project requirements as described in this manual, your club might give demonstrations, judge, make exhibits, and take part in tours.

Demonstrations: This project as well as others blends itself into many types of demonstrations. A few of the things that you might demonstrate are:

First Aid Measures -- such as treatment of cuts and burns.

Artificial Respiration.

Good Personal Health Habits -- such as how to properly brush your teeth.

Proper Disposal of Garbage.

Cleaning Food.

Cleaning Cookings Utensils and Dishes.

Home Pasteurization of Milk.

Control of Rats and Mice.

Insect Control; such as how to control flies.

For information on how to give a demonstration ask your county agent or home agent for a copy of "How and Why of 4-H Demonstrations," E.C. 417.

Judging: Health judging exercises may be complicated or simple. Some of the simple ones are to judge (1) garbage cans, (2) food storage facilities in a food cellar, basement or den, and (3) containers for milk. Some of the more complicated things that your club might judge are (1) buildings for rat-proofing, (2) wells, and (3) earth pit toilets.

Exhibits: The best exhibit you have is yourself. Always put your best side forward. Things that you might make and exhibit are:

Grooming Kits.

Health Booths.

First Aid Kits.

Health Posters.

Tours: Tours can be fun and educational. There are many points of interest to be seen.